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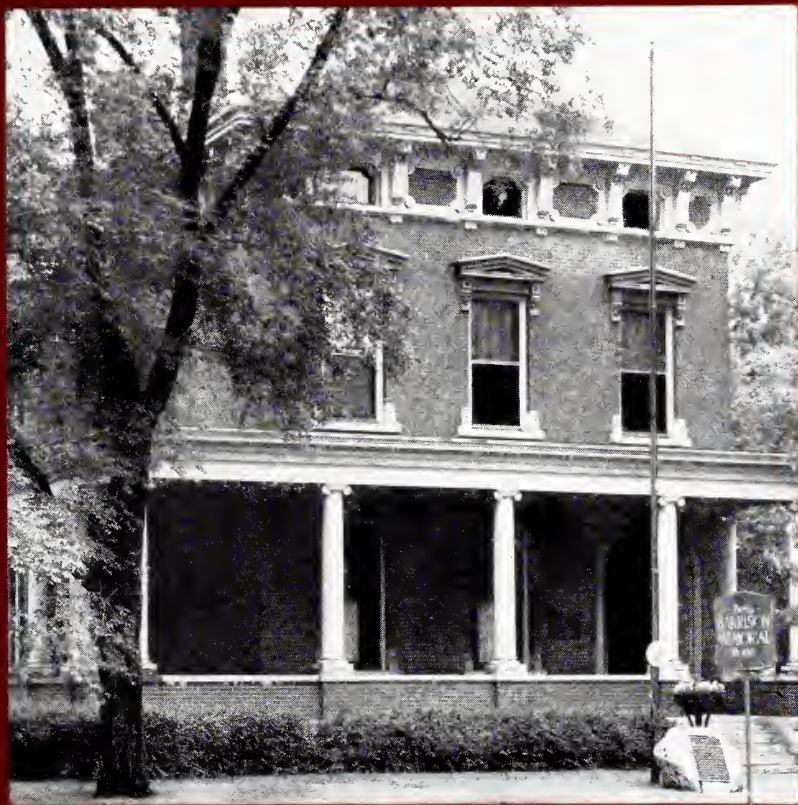
# Abraham Lincoln's Contemporaries

Benjamin Harrison

Excerpts from newspapers and other  
sources

From the files of the  
Lincoln Financial Foundation Collection









## *The Harrison Family*

THE HARRISON FAMILY is extraordinary in that for generation after generation it has produced national characters distinguished for intellect and achievement, but we are concerned here only with that branch of the family in direct line of descent from the original Harrison, "The Emigrant," through whom came the Indiana Harrisons.

We find the first mention of Benjamin Harrison, "The Emigrant," in 1633 in his signature as Clerk of the Council of Virginia, then later in 1640 as a member of the House of Burgesses.

His son, Benjamin Harrison the second (b. — d. 1712), was sent to England as a Commissioner from the Colony in 1645, and was later also a member of the House of Burgesses.

His son, Benjamin Harrison the third (b. 1673, d. 1742), was Attorney General, then Treasurer, and later Speaker in the House of Burgesses. It was he who established the ancestral estate of Berkeley, one of the most beautiful of the famous Tidewater estates on the James River.

His son, Benjamin Harrison the fourth (b. 1700, d. 1744), carried on the family name as Speaker in the House of Burgesses, and in 1726 he enlarged the home at Berkeley, which is still standing. As a center of culture, refinement, and hospitality this home rose in importance until it reached its peak with his son, Benjamin the fifth.



BERKELEY, CHARLES CITY COUNTY, VIRGINIA

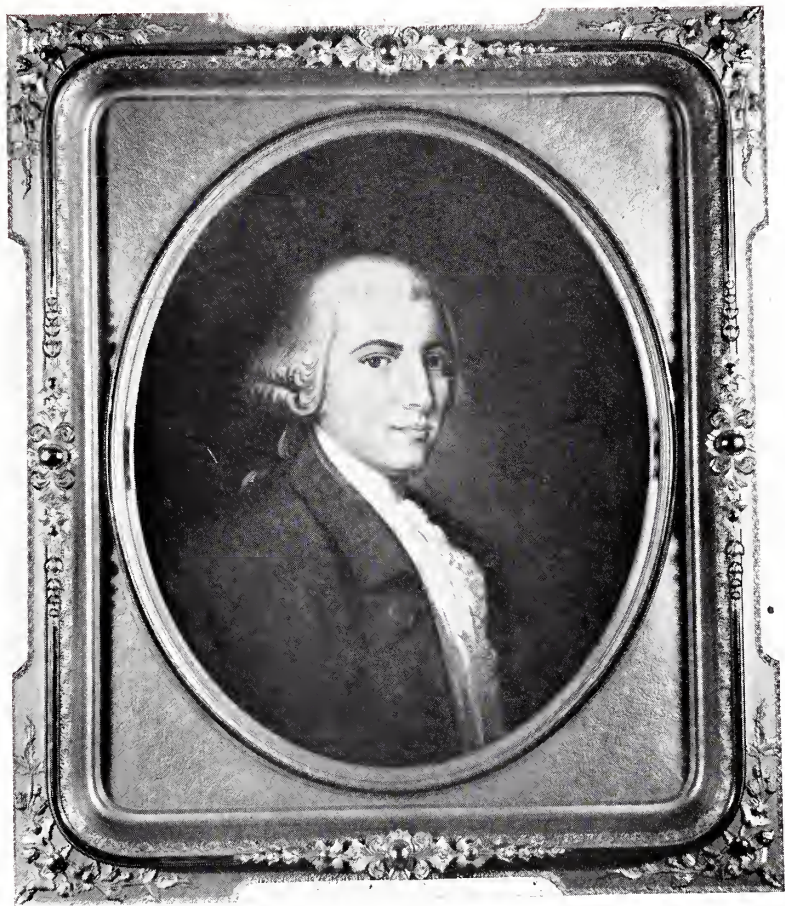
*Benjamin Harrison V, (The Signer)*

**B**ENJAMIN HARRISON the fifth (b. 1726, d. April 24, 1791) was Speaker of the Virginia House of Burgesses, later member of the Continental Congress, Signer of the Declaration of Independence, and he was afterwards Governor of Virginia for three successive terms. He was a man of great distinction as well as great stature. A true "aristocrat," he was well educated and had powerful influence in that critical revolutionary period. He was a personal friend of Washington, and as Chairman of the committee on foreign correspondence was in effect our first Secretary of State. (The office of Secretary of State was created later.)

When George Rogers Clark captured the British Fort Sackville at Vincennes he planted the flag of the Colony of Virginia and he claimed title, by conquest, to this vast mid-western land later designated as the North West Territory.

At this time, 1779, Patrick Henry was Governor of Virginia, but later the Treaty of Paris formally ceded the North West Territory to Virginia, and Benjamin Harrison, then Governor of Virginia, became the first undisputed ruler or governor of the great North West Territory. This was a large unexplored tract, later to be pioneered and governed by Benjamin Harrison's son, William Henry Harrison.

This portrait was made from the only known authentic likeness of the Signer, a miniature surrounded by pearls. It was carried away by the family when they fled, at the time the British soldiers sacked Berkeley and burned all the furnishings. It was at this time the portraits of all the early Harrisons were unfortunately destroyed.



BENJAMIN HARRISON V, (THE SIGNER)

## *President William Henry Harrison*

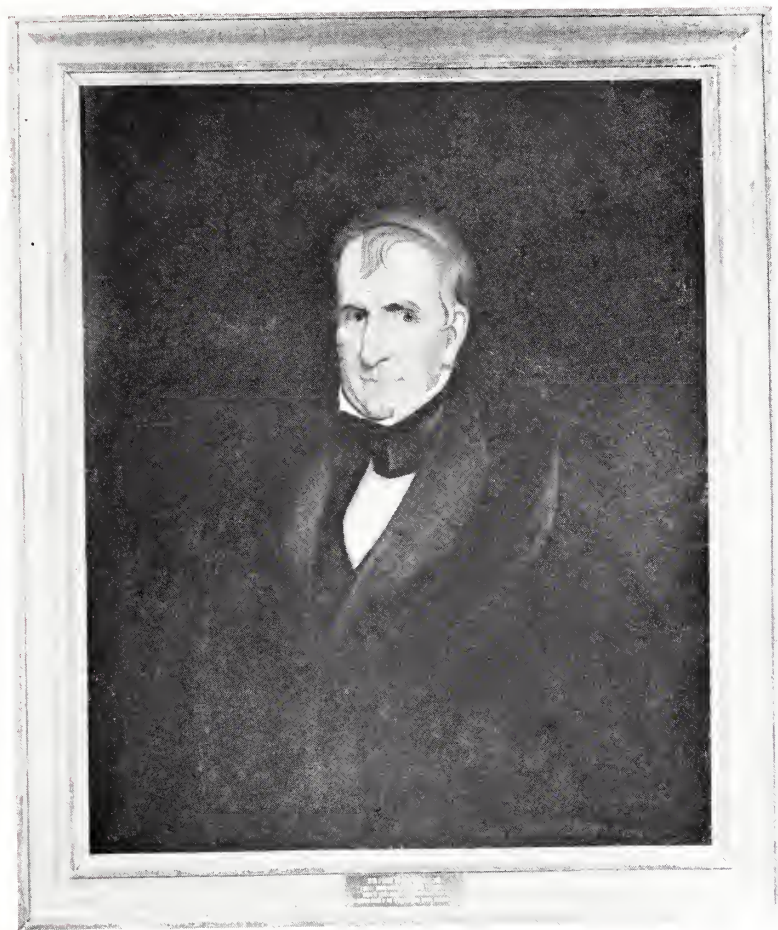


**W**ILLIAM HENRY HARRISON, son of Benjamin Harrison the fifth, "The Signer" (b. Feb. 9, 1773, d. April 4, 1841), at the time of his father's death was studying in Philadelphia to become a doctor. He then accepted a commission from President Washington and came West, and the next few years were spent under General Anthony Wayne where he made a name for himself both as an Indian fighter and

arbitrator. At the age of twenty-seven he was appointed Indiana Territory's first Governor, and he built a stately home at Vincennes, called "Grouseland," also the "White House of the West," where six of his nine children were born.

The battle that gave him his famous nickname was fought against the Indians at "Tippecanoe" in 1811, then in 1813 he was also the hero of the "Battle of the Thames" against the red allies of the British, which was one of the decisive battles of the War of 1812. He became the Ninth President on March 4, 1841, and died one month later. He was the oldest man ever elected President and held the shortest term of office.

This portrait of William Henry Harrison in his inaugural robe in 1841, painted by Beard, was much prized by his grandson, Benjamin Harrison.



PRESIDENT WILLIAM HENRY HARRISON

*John Scott Harrison*

**J** OHN SCOTT HARRISON, the son of William Henry Harrison, was born at Vincennes, Indiana (b. Oct. 4, 1804, d. May, 1878). He was named after the family doctor, John Scott, who had also named his son after William Henry Harrison. He was educated at Miami University, and was a fine scholar and an orator of distinction.

As Congressman from Ohio he made many notable addresses in Washington, and his integrity was never questioned. He was the only man ever to be "the son of one President and the father of another."

This portrait of John Scott Harrison was painted by Randolph Coates from an early photograph.



JOHN SCOTT HARRISON

## *President Benjamin Harrison*



*The North Bend Ohio home of President William Henry Harrison—Birthplace of President Benjamin Harrison.*

Our President, Benjamin Harrison (b. Aug. 20, 1833, d. Mar. 13, 1901), was the fifth child of John Scott Harrison. After he was graduated from Miami University at Oxford, he was elected Reporter of the Supreme Court of Indiana at Indianapolis. He led the 70th Indiana Regiment through the entire Civil War, first as Colonel, and later as Brigadier General.

He was United States Senator from 1881 to 1887, and President from 1889 to 1893. He was a lawyer of great repute and an outstanding extemporaneous speaker. He was the founder of the Indiana State Bar Association, and won his most famous case, a boundary dispute between Venezuela and England, after his return from the White House.

To him we owe the formation of our huge National Park System of the West, and the conservation and preservation of the great redwoods of California.

He was the eighth successive Harrison to hold an important position in the history of our country.

This portrait was copied by Earl Byers from an original campaign etching.



PRESIDENT BENJAMIN HARRISON

### *The President Harrison Memorial Home*

THE HOME of Benjamin Harrison, the twenty-third President of the United States, is a comfortable, well-built brick house of sixteen rooms. Surrounded by the original large elms and oaks, it still stands on the wide tree-lined street within a few blocks of the former homes of Booth Tarkington, James Whitcomb Riley, Meredith Nicholson, Charles W. Fairbanks, and many others prominent in the famed '90s.

The home was built by Benjamin Harrison in 1874, and with exception of the years spent in Washington as United States Senator and President, he lived here continuously until his death.

In 1936 the home was purchased by the Arthur Jordan Foundation, restored, and on June 25, 1938, the fiftieth anniversary of Harrison's nomination to the Presidency, was opened to the public as a perpetual memorial to our twenty-third President.

During the political campaign of 1888, Benjamin Harrison made many speeches from the front steps (the original front porch campaign). The present large porch was built after his return from Washington.

A bronze plaque on a boulder in the front yard proclaims the fact that Benjamin Harrison was the commanding officer of the 70th Indiana Regiment throughout the Civil War. Fort Benjamin Harrison is named after him.



THE PRESIDENT HARRISON MEMORIAL HOME

**A**S YOU ENTER the large front hall the portrait of Caroline Scott Harrison greets you. She was the first president general of the Daughters of the American Revolution, and this lovely portrait was presented to the Home by them on their fiftieth anniversary. They presented the original (by David Huntington) to the White House in 1893, and in a room set aside there Randolph Coates of Indianapolis made this copy of the original.

Mrs. Harrison was a gracious First Lady, and died in the White House October 25, 1892. She had two children, Russell Benjamin and Mary Scott, both now deceased. The daughter Mary (Mrs. Robert McKee) was the hostess in the White House after her mother became ill, and it was due to her care and interest that the pictures, gowns, dishes, and many other things now back in the Home are in such wonderful state of preservation.

Much of the original furniture was found stored in the ballroom on the third floor at the time the house was turned over to the Arthur Jordan Foundation by the second Mrs. Harrison. Ex-President Harrison and Mary Lord Dimick, a widow, and niece of the first Mrs. Harrison, were married in New York City in 1896. Mrs. Harrison died January 5, 1948. They had one daughter, Elizabeth (Mrs. James B. Walker), now deceased.



CAROLINE SCOTT HARRISON

### *The Front Hall*

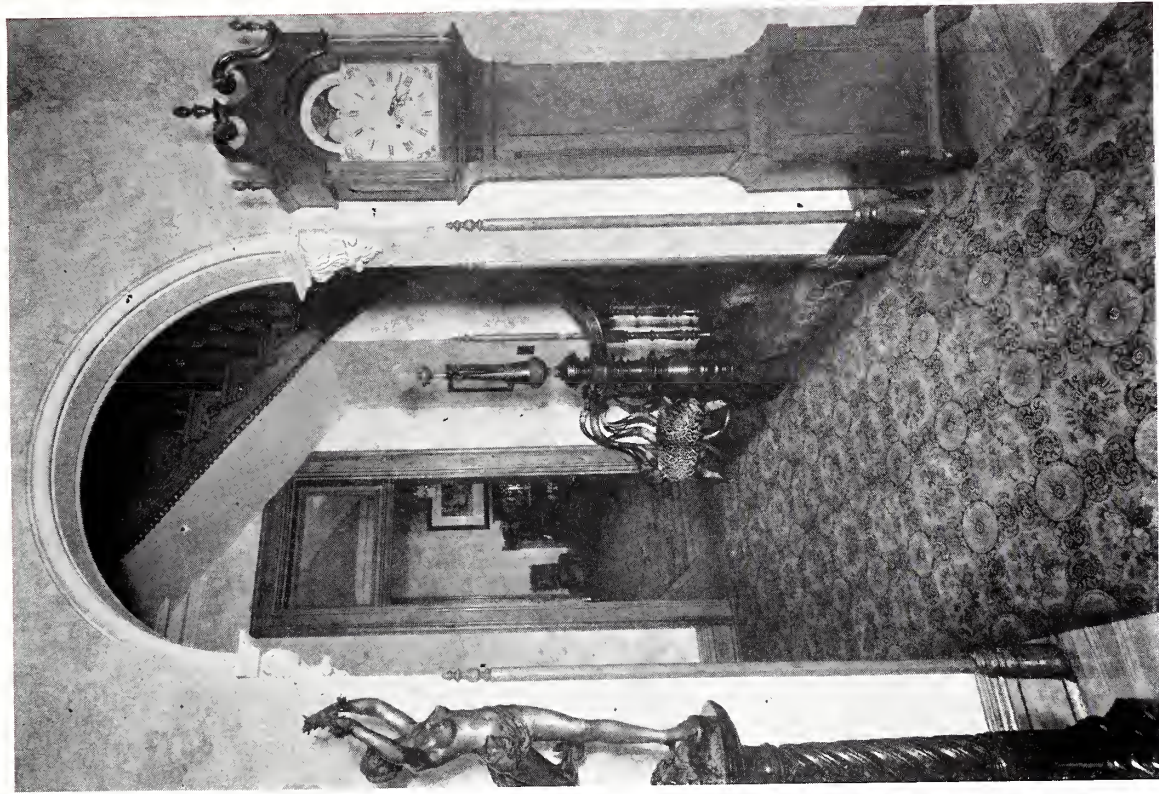
**T**HE OLD CHERRY grandfather clock stands in its accustomed place in the hall. This clock was purchased from the Virginia branch of the Harrison family when Benjamin Harrison was Senator. Made about 1800 by a George Woltz of Hagerstown, Maryland, it has the moon dial and the date dial that make it a monthly calendar as well as a time piece.

In its same corner on the opposite side of the hall, a graceful bronze statue poses on its marble pedestal.

The Texas steer horn chair was an inaugural gift to Benjamin Harrison from D. M. O'Connor who was a ranch owner in Texas. In the back of the chair a gold plate has the name of Benjamin Harrison in small diamonds, and the chair seat is covered in the original leopard skin.

At the foot of the stairs the unusual lamp on the newel post was made from the nozzle of the old fire hose used and presented to him by the Old Indianapolis Volunteer Fire Brigade, of which he was a member as a young man.

A graceful half spiral staircase, unsupported from the second to the third floor, leads to the old ballroom. Here eventually will be displayed campaign pictures, badges, and the many other original articles that do not have a fitting place in the Home.



THE FRONT HALL

### *The Front Parlor*

**T**HE ORIGINAL sparkling, cut crystal chandeliers are in both the front and back parlors. These were formerly used for gas but were changed to electricity in 1895, after the return from the White House. It is also interesting to know that it was during the Harrison administration that electricity was installed in the White House.

The large rug in the front parlor is an original one. It is an imported hand-made rug, thought to be an Aubausson.

Large gold-plated mirrors played an important part in the decorative scheme of the Victorian period and certainly no one could find lovelier ones than these. The one on the mantel is of exceptional design and is the original finish, but it was necessary to have the two pier or console mirrors replated.

Gold furniture was often used in formal rooms, and the three matched pieces are of gold leaf, while the three against the south wall are of gilt.

The lovely ostrich feather fan (displayed in an ornate gold frame) was a Christmas gift in 1890 to Mrs. Harrison from Mrs. Grant. It was sent to her in the White House from Vienna, Austria.



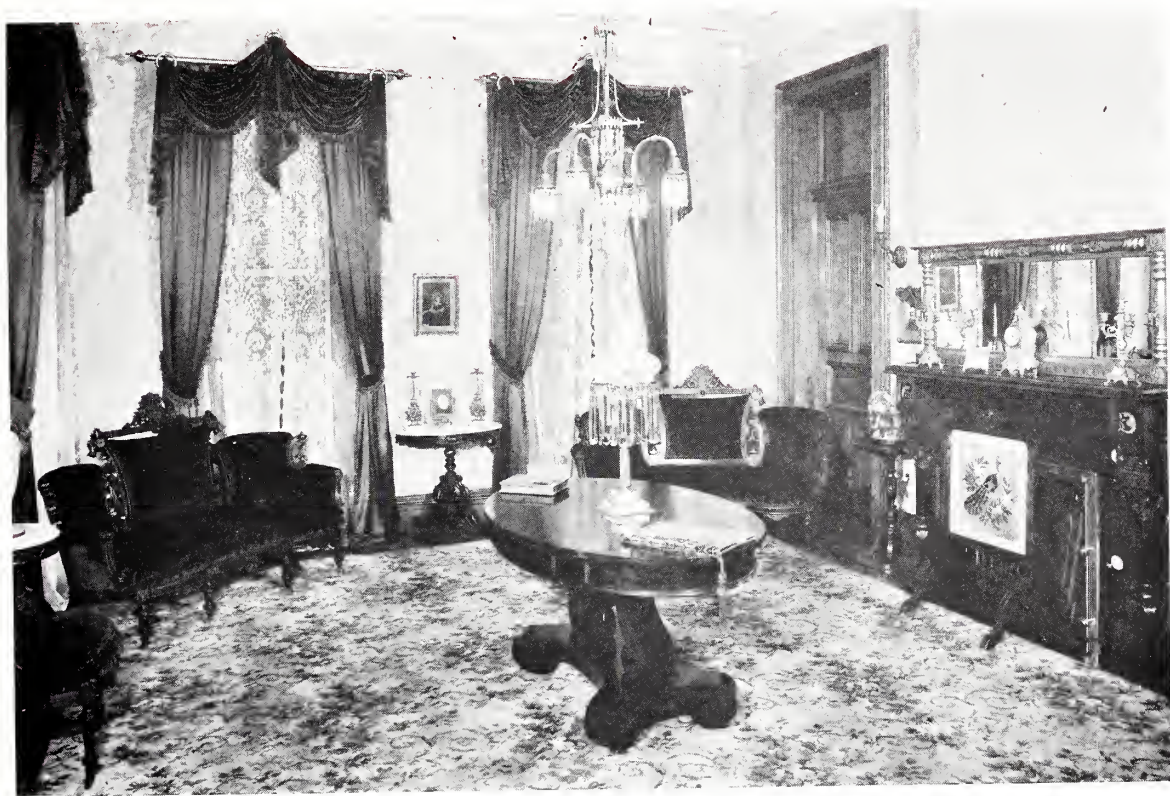
THE FRONT PARLOR

### *The Back Parlor*

**T**HE RED velvet-covered, inlaid walnut furniture in the back parlor blends with the inlaid walnut mantels. This room was also used as a music room and the piano always stood in the corner to the right of the mantel (not shown). This one is of rosewood, beautifully inlaid with mother of pearl, and with unusual round tipped keys. The piano stool was used in the White House.

The picture between the windows is of the second Mrs. Harrison. A large oil landscape which formerly hung in the Harrison sitting room at the White House now hangs over the piano in this room.

The American-made music box (not shown) was an instrument popular in music and drawing rooms of that period. The practically indestructible copper disks record the music of that day. Here are preserved marches by Sousa and waltzes by Strauss, and many other familiar songs. This box is in splendid condition and has a wonderful tone quality.



THE BACK PARLOR

## *The Library*



THE NOMINATION for the Presidency was accepted formally by Benjamin Harrison on July 4, 1888, in the back parlor, but the library is also of historical interest as the campaign was planned here and many important men of the day visited in this room. It is definitely a Harrison room. Here hang the portraits of the last four of the illustrious Harrisons, and here is his desk and study table. The two upholstered chairs are original, although the cathedral chairs came from the homes of Indiana governors whose history is tied in with Harrison's.

The large handsome hand-carved walnut bookcase has never been moved from the library since the day it was placed there in 1874. In it are Harrison's books, many autographed. The large Bible was presented to him by the "Tippecanoe Club" of Marion County.

The ornate jars on the mantel and the "humidifier" on the hearth are gifts from the Ambassador from Hungary. The clock matches the marble in the hearth. It was taken to the White House by Mrs. Harrison and stood in her room there until her death.

Benjamin Harrison was a great admirer of Abraham Lincoln, who commissioned him Brigadier General during the Civil War. It therefore seems quite appropriate for Harrison to have in his library this portrait of his old Commander in Chief. This portrait was painted by Jacob Cox, and it hung at the head of Lincoln's casket April 30, 1865, the day that his body lay in state in the old State House in Indianapolis. It was owned by a personal friend, John Henry Vajen, who was Quartermaster General of Indiana throughout the Civil War.



THE LIBRARY

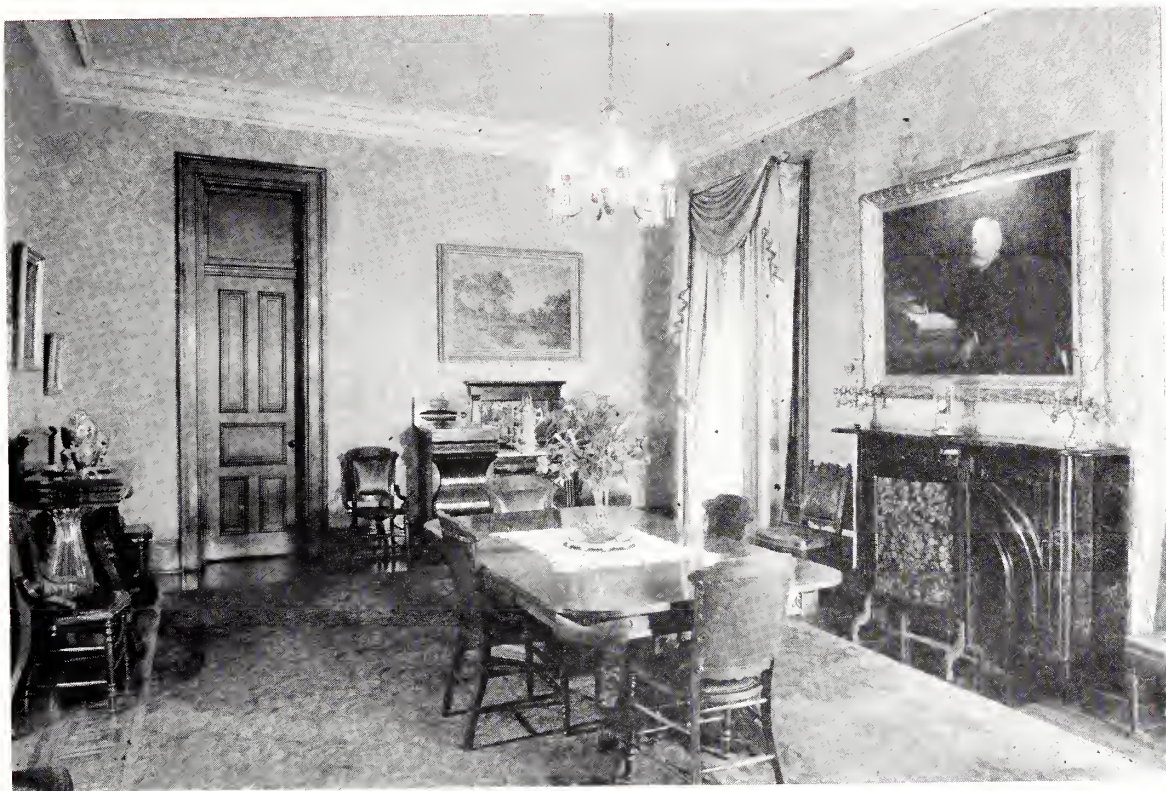
### *The Dining Room*

**T**HE LARGE PORTRAIT of Benjamin Harrison over the mantel in the dining room was painted by T. C. Steele, after Harrison's return from the White House. It was painted for John Wanamaker, who was Harrison's personal friend, as well as Postmaster General during Harrison's administration. It hung in John Wanamaker's office in Philadelphia until it was presented to the Home in 1939.

The furniture in this room is all original. The silver water pitcher and goblets were an Inaugural gift from the "Republican Ladies Club" of Iowa.

A large vase in the right hand corner was another Inaugural gift. It is a very lovely Rookwood, of the original Rookwood colorings.

The china closet (not shown) houses many dishes of interest and value. Outstanding among them are the four pieces from the Lincoln dinner service and the four from the Harrison. The latter were designed by Caroline Scott Harrison—and many of the others in the cabinet were painted by her.



THE DINING ROOM

### *The Law Office*

**I**N THE SMALL ROOM on the second floor is shown the furniture used for many years in the law office of Benjamin Harrison, located in the old Union Trust Building on East Market Street.

Here are two unusual filing cabinets and his own personal desk, which is quite interesting, as it is in two separate parts. On the right side of the desk part is a filing cabinet for his own personal letters, and it was here that a number of his letters were found. When closed it looks like a roll top desk and on the top is a mail slot.

We also find another portrait by T. C. Steele. This is of William Henry Harrison Miller who was named after Benjamin Harrison's grandfather, but who was no relation. He was the law partner of Benjamin Harrison for many years and later as Attorney General served on his cabinet.

A large emblem of the G. A. R. (Grand Army of the Republic) hangs over the desk and an interesting picture shows the home of William Henry Harrison at North Bend. It was in this home that Benjamin Harrison was born.



THE LAW OFFICE

### *The Guest Room*



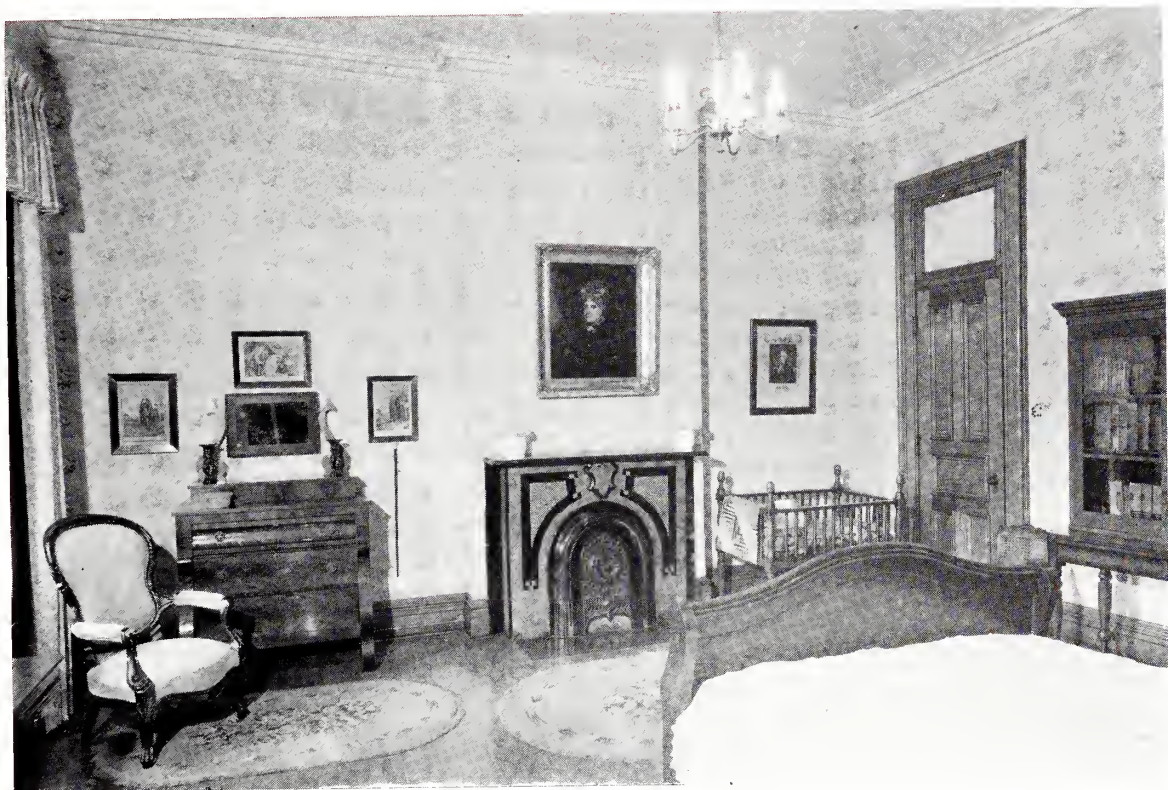
**T**HIS ROOM WAS USED as a guest room by the Harrisons and the interesting half tester top bed was used in this room during the 70's.

Around the dresser are these interesting Currier prints of William Henry Harrison. Below one hangs the cane that is in his hand in the picture above.

A very interesting portrait of Mrs. William Henry Harrison hangs over the mantel and over the cradle is an autographed engraving of William Henry Harrison.

The cradle was used by six of their children and one of the six was our Benjamin Harrison's father, John Scott Harrison.

The very old book case is said to have been in the Harrison home at North Bend.



THE GUEST ROOM

## *The Gown Room*



**I**N MRS. HARRISON'S former sitting room on the second floor are displayed the gowns worn in the White House by Mrs. Harrison and her daughter. Here are the gowns worn at the Inauguration and at other formal functions. Mrs. Harrison's daughter, Mrs. Robert McKee, was the acting hostess in the White House after her mother became ill, and her gowns displayed here with her mother's, were worn by her at that time. The heavy white satin one was worn first when she was presented to Queen Victoria



at the Court of Saint James, later she also wore it in the White House.

The gorgeous materials of pure silk are amazingly well preserved after being packed away for fifty years with just a few tobacco leaves as a protection from moths.

The dolls with their complete wardrobe of the period are interesting to both young and old. One is dressed in a copy of one of Mrs. Harrison's gowns. They were packed in the "doll trunk" for many years.

In the closet are displayed bonnets, fans, parasols, and many other personal things that were also packed with the gowns in the large trunks. These are all original.



THE GOWN ROOM

### *The Master Bedroom*



**I**N THE BEDROOM the massive hand-carved bed is the one on which Benjamin Harrison died in this room. A dresser, rocker and two straight chairs (not shown) complete a matched set. All the furniture in this room is original. The exerciser next to the mantel was a personal gift which he is said to have been very faithful about using.

The crib bed, in the alcove, was used by Benjamin Harrison at North Bend in 1833. It was used by his children in Indianapolis, and a picture shows it standing in the White House nursery where it was used by his grand-children.



THE MASTER BEDROOM

MARCH 13, 1901, our 23d president, after an illness of only a few days, passed on to join his illustrious ancestors, and his body was laid to rest in Crown Hill Cemetery at Indianapolis, just a short distance from the grave of his friend and neighbor, James Whitcomb Riley.

The funeral was a dignified ceremony, attended by many celebrities, including the then President of the United States, William McKinley.

Thus ended the life of a great and useful citizen, a life sincerely devoted to the welfare of the nation that his great-grandfather helped to create, his grandfather pioneered and governed, and he himself, as Brigadier General in the trying days of the Civil War, helped to preserve. A grateful nation mourned the loss of a genuine statesman.

On his tomb appear these words:

“Statesman, yet friend to truth,  
of soul sincere.

In action faithful,  
in honor clear.”



THE HARRISON TOMB







Wendell Phillips



President Harrison's Library where election returns were tallied as they came on the specially installed telegraph.



This gracious dining room was the setting for elegant dinners served to national and international dignitaries and loving family gatherings.



Caroline Harrison in a letter to her daughter Mary McKee explained that she chose corn to surround the border of the elegant Haviland White House China because it was "a crop indigenous to the North American Continent."



Benjamin Harrison's sixteen room Italianate Victorian house, built in 1874-75, figured prominently in his campaign for the presidency.

When news of his nomination reached Indianapolis in the summer of 1888, enthusiastic friends and neighbors congratulated him at his home. During the following weeks, standing on his front stoop, Benjamin Harrison gave 80 "front porch" speeches to 300,000 citizens who marched to the home on Delaware Street.

Whitney Home Gymnasium in display in the Master Bedroom.



After his presidency, Harrison returned to North Delaware Street, undertook an extensive redecorating project and resumed his law practice. He and Mary Lord Dimmick were married in 1896 and a daughter, Elizabeth was born the following year. He died in his home on March 13, 1901.





A painting of a young girl with large, white, feathered wings, looking directly at the viewer. The wings are spread wide, and the girl has a serene expression. The background is a soft, warm tone.

web site <http://www.surf-ici.com/harrison>  
email address [harrison@surf-ici.com](mailto:harrison@surf-ici.com)



Guided tours which begin every 30 minutes are approximately 1 hour.

To schedule group visits or for  
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Benjamin



## HOURS

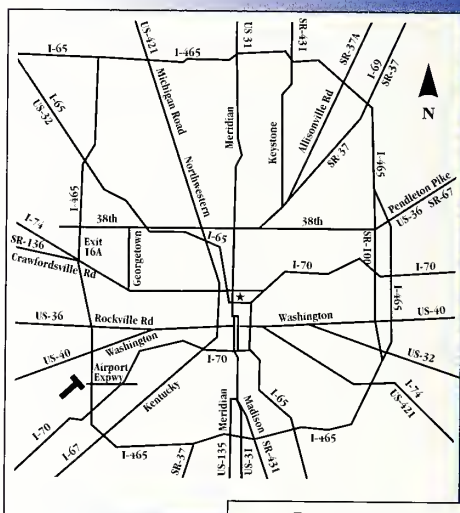
Monday - Saturday:  
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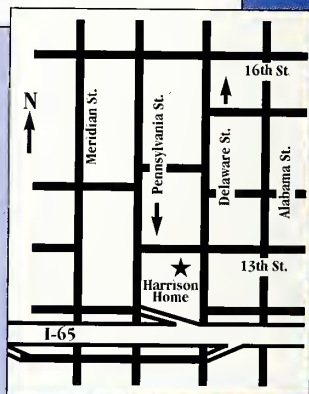
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